

WILMINGTON DISTRICT NEWS ONLINE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007

COMMITMENT TO COASTAL NC EARNS TOM JARRETT CIVILIAN DISTINGUISHED GALLERY AWARD

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

***Up Front
The Greatest
Gifts are Not
Expensive*** 2

***Neil Myers Re-
ports on Tour
in Gulf Region
Division*** 3

***LDP Group In-
troduces Final
Project to
Corporate
Board*** 5

***News & Ob-
server Names
Terry Brown
"Tarheel of the
Week"*** 6

***Wilmington
District
Introduces
Newest
Employees*** 8

***Lose Yourself in
Stained Glass*** 12

***Colella, Hall
Pass Rigorous
PMP test*** 15



Tom Jarrett, center, and his wife Paula, stand with Wilmington District Commander COL J.P. Pulliam by a newly unveiled plaque that honors Jarrett as a Wilmington District Civilian Distinguished Employee. The plaque is displayed in the District headquarters building.

Tom Jarrett retired from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers seven years ago. He made a career out of innovative ways to help maintain the power of Mother Nature on North Carolina's coasts. Seven years later he still enjoying a new career that

won't let him get away from the coast. It's his love of the sea that made the Asheville native and NC State University graduate the 24th inductee as a Wilmington District Distinguished Employee.

Con't on page 4

UP FRONT

THE GREATEST GIFTS ARE NOT EXPENSIVE

Team Mates,

Jacque and I wish you all wonderful holidays and hope that you have the opportunity to enjoy them in good health with family and friends. The greatest gifts in life are not expensive; diamond rings, fast cars, and expensive toys do not qualify as "the greatest." No, the greatest gifts are a hug from a child, a good conversation with a parent, a laugh with a brother, sister or friends, and a quiet moment of bliss with your beloved. We tend to take these precious gifts for granted, particularly when we are rich with them, but they are what counts at the end of the day. Jacque, Alex, Katie and I wish for each of you as many of these gifts as you can possibly stand.



Please keep our deployed troops (Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen, Coast Guardsmen and Civilians) in your thoughts and prayers, particularly through the holiday season. We are all delighted to have Neil Myers so recently home from Iraq--and very proud of his selfless service and exceptional performance as a construction representative for the Gulf Regional Division. Several other team mates--Sherry and April, Cheryl and Mamie, Tony and Debora--continue to serve forward, and may miss the holidays with their loved ones. We are very proud of each of them.

This issue of *Wilmington District News Online* celebrates Neil's homecoming, as well as the recent induction of long-time SAW-ite Tom Jarrett into the district's Gallery of Distinguished Civilians. As only the 24th inductee into our local "Hall of Fame" in the District's

123-year history, Tom joins a very select group of former team mates. Warm congratulations to Tom; his name and story are now permanently etched into the district's lineage.

Wilmington District News Online includes several other interesting highlights this month as well: Shelly Thompson's recent retirement from the United States Navy after a distinguished career, our new SAW employees and other news.

Once again, the very best to you and yours through the holidays. Especially if you will be travelling, be safe--to succeed in our large and complex mission, we need every member of the team to get back healthy and refreshed so that we can tackle new challenges in 2008!

Essayons and Army Strong!
JP

Wilmington District News Online is an unofficial publication authorized under provisions of AR 360-1 published each month by the Wilmington District Public Affairs Office to keep District employees informed of current District news, activities and achievements. Send submissions for **Wilmington District News Online** to henry.g.heusinkveld@saw02.usace.army.mil or penny.schmitt@saw02.usace.army.mil

District Commander: COL John E. Pulliam, Jr.

Chief, Public Affairs: Penelope Schmitt

Managing Editor: Hank Heusinkveld

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Wilmington District



ON THE GROUND IN IRAQ, NEIL MYERS SAW A DIFFERENT STORY

“It was like a Peace Corps assignment” Neil Myers said of his six-month tour in Iraq. Considering that Myers reports 240 mortar attacks on his location at Camp Echo, 80 km south of Baghdad near the City of Diwaniya, it wasn’t *exactly* like the Peace Corps.

But the work and the rewards speak of the tight connections to another nation’s communities and families that are the unforgettable features of an overseas assignment—in the Peace Corps or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“I served as Construction Representative on some of the hundreds of infrastructure projects that are going on in the background of the conflict we hear so much about in the news,” he said. “I mainly worked on five primary health care centers. These are like a small hospital, with radiology, a small operating room, a maternity care facility and a dental clinic.” I also served as project lead on a new water treatment plant and a electrical distribution

network designed to serve over 200,000 people.

“We’re helping people by building facilities they never believed could be possible.” Once the new medical facilities are open, a broken leg doesn’t need to mean a lifelong disability, he explained, nor does an infected cut or dental abscess have to be life threatening. Mothers can look forward to a basic level of pre-natal care!

“Ninety-nine percent of the people I met *want* us to be there. In the rural, small villages, we are bringing health facilities and water treatment and electricity where there has never been little if any before. People may not have a tap in their house, but new water treatment plants are providing a public faucet for many of the small, rural villages where people can get water that they don’t have to boil or be afraid of. They have only dreamed of this, and they are so pleased that we often get ‘hero’ treatment when we show up at small villages or construction sites.”

Myers explained that his construction supervision work involved traveling about the countryside with four armored security vehicles and at least eight armed guards. “My job was to visit each site, normally two or three trips outside the base per week, to inspect progress on the work, resolve construction problems, and determine contractor progress percentages; all with the help of an Iraqi interpreter provided by the security teams.”

“We worked seven days a week, 10 –



Neil Myers displays the “scepter” he carved from a discarded tent pole during his off time in Iraq. Note the detail in the workmanship. (Inset images.)

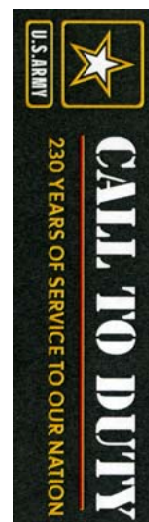
11 hours a day except for a half day off on Friday mornings,” Myers said. “It was definitely tough duty, but so rewarding. We really came to appreciate the pride people showed in their work, and in the new facilities we were providing for their communities.”

The camaraderie and sense of fulfillment that comes from doing something truly life-changing for people made the challenges of working in the war-torn desert worth while for Myers. “All of my career I have worked in recreation and lakes management,” he said.

While some might find this ‘extreme career make-over’ enough as a once-in-a-lifetime experience, Myers says that once he has rested up and attended to the business he left behind, he might just consider another deployment. “You’ll never make more of a difference in people’s lives than you can do in a job like this!” he said.



“Ninety-nine percent of the people I met want us there.” Neil Myers



TOM JARRETT CON'T

Jarrett served the Wilmington District as lead coastal engineer for more than 35 years, including service as Chief of Coastal Engineering and Hydrology from 1985-2000. He mentored a cadre of professionals who continue his national leadership. Under his direction, the Wilmington District's coastal engineers helped design projects like the Wilmington Morehead harbor deepening, Masonboro Inlet jetty and sand management plan, the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Oregon Inlet terminal groin, and shore protection projects at Ocean Isle, Wrightsville, Carolina and Kure Beaches.

"One of the keys to success is being involved with the stakeholders," he said. "I made it a point to go to all meetings. You have to keep people informed and up to date on the latest developments. And we always thought of ways to let the public know how we could help."

Jarrett contributed to important coastal initiatives, serving on the Governor's Oregon Inlet Task Force,



Jarrett, fourth from left in first row, spent numerous hours early in his career at the Waterways Experiment Station in Vicksburg, Mississippi.



Jarrett ceremoniously places his plaque in the hallway just outside the office of the District Commander.

the NC Highway Task Force, the science panel for NC Highway 12, and the board of the North Carolina Shore and Beach Preservation Association. He also served on many federal-level expert teams dealing with Coastal Engineering, inlets research, shoreline protection and regional sand management. His outstanding contributions have been widely recognized with awards from the Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association, the North Carolina Order of the Long leaf Pine, and numerous federal awards. For his outstanding engineering and coastal expertise, his creation of an expert team, his nationally renowned service coastal engineering and policy development, and his many contributions to his local community, Tom has been a model for technical excellence and public service. We are proud to see his name, his picture and his great accomplishments grace the halls of the Wilmington District with other Distinguished Employees. ■

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM'S "DIRTY DOZEN" INTRODUCES NEW AND USEFUL TOOLS FOR DISTRICT(S) INTRANET

**Submitted by Angela Williams
& Mickey Sugg**

The 2007 SAW/SAC Leadership Development Program Team, aka the Dirty Dozen, introduced its projects, the Travel Portal and the Internal Knowledge Tree, to the Wilmington District's Corporate Board on Nov 1st. Both the Travel Portal and the Internal Knowledge Tree are accessible via the District's intranet and are for internal use only.

The Travel Portal provides convenient access to a variety of travel related information and is designed to help employees who have limited knowledge of requirements before, during, and after official travel. Some of the components of the Travel Portal include processing travel orders and vouchers, using the Individually Billed Account travel card, making airline reservations, acquiring rental cars, lodging, and vehicle accident reporting. Employees will be able to access

links to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and other travel related subjects.

The Internal Knowledge Tree will help employees understand how their District is organized, the roles each office plays in accomplishing its mission, and the duties of employees within those offices. The main components of the Internal Knowledge Tree are the employee directory, the organization chart, and the retiree's database. The employee directory includes all current employees' names, titles, office, and location. The organization chart is a diagram showing how the organizations are structured. The office summaries include details about the functions of each office. The retiree's database is a list of retirees that are willing to be contacted by current employees and information about their background and expertise. With the continual changes in the Corps environment, it is the intention



Tracy Wheeler, at podium, fields a question from Corporate Board member Hank Maser as SAW Training Coordinator Lora Reid looks on.

that both intranet resources will be a catalyst for a more efficient working environment for the Charleston and Wilmington Districts. ■

**Internal Knowledge Tree
Link:**

[sawintra.saw.ds.usace.army.mil/
tree/default.asp](http://sawintra.saw.ds.usace.army.mil/tree/default.asp)

Travel Portal Link:

[//intranet.sac.ds.usace.army.mil/
travel/](http://intranet.sac.ds.usace.army.mil/travel/)

NEWS AND OBSERVER NAMES TERRY BROWN THE “TARHEEL OF THE WEEK”

Editor's Note— Reprint courtesy of News and Observer. And for the record, Brown is a “Wolfpacker.” ;)

Engineer uses compromise to manage water

Brown likes openness, getting many people involved in discussion

By Matthew Eisley, Staff Writer

RALEIGH - As water managers met recently, Terry Brown calmly refereed as Raleigh's utilities director and a federal wildlife officer sparred over their responses to the region's withering drought.

Raleigh wanted to divert water

from two of its Swift Creek lakes to the Neuse River, so more water could be held back upstream at Falls Lake, the city's water source.

Wildlife officials were taking their time reviewing the proposal, even as Falls Lake hit an all-time low with little rain in sight.

The bickering lasted several minutes before the exasperated utilities chief left for another meeting.

Brown's immediate summation of the heated confrontation: "A good, healthy discussion."

Faced with a crisis, many managers would hole up, close ranks and issue unilateral orders.

Brown, 54, of Wilmington prefers an open discussion among the dozens of stakeholders with an interest in the five lakes, six rivers and 1,500 miles of navigable water he manages in North Carolina and Virginia.

Brown listens to their concerns, entertains their ideas, gets them to acknowledge one another's needs and goads them into compromises when necessary. His twin focuses: truth and trust.

"I've learned over the years that to have a good level of trust, you have to have an open process where ideas are valued and openly discussed," he says. "Many times, we come up with a common-sense course of action. And everybody understands how we got there."

"It's a good sanity check. It's more fun, too."

If fun can be had during a persistent drought, Brown is having it. The North Carolina native and N.C. State University-trained engineer seems at his best combining his technical skill with understated diplomatic savvy. ■



Terry Brown, upper left, confers with Justin Ward, center, Savannah District, Dan Emerson, right, and Tony Young, foreground.

Not Terry Brown, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' water control manager for much of the state, including depleted Falls Lake north of Raleigh.

Even during what's shaping up to be the region's worst recorded drought,

OPERATIONS MEMBER RETIRES ON DECK OF FAMOUS CITY LANDMARK

Teammates,

Please join me in congratulating Chief Warrant Officer (Ret.) Shelly Thompson on her retirement from the United States Navy Reserve. Shelly is our Administrative Support Assistant taking care of all of our crew members in the Floating Plant Section.

Just to give you a brief taste of what has been a stellar and very “active” reserve career, CWO Thompson served our country in the Navy for 26 years, eight years of this time on active duty as a Yeoman, and four more years on active duty under Title 10 recall. She was promoted to the rank of Chief Petty Officer (E-7) in 1995, which for us in the military know this is one of the greatest milestones in ones career. In 2002, CWO Thompson was selected for commissioning as a

Chief Warrant Officer and achieved CWO3 during her career.

CWO Thompson’s jobs in the reserves were primarily in expeditionary warfare serving with Cargo Handling Battalions and Naval Coastal Warfare communities. As a cargo handler, Shelly served in the Mediterranean and European Command during Desert Shield/Desert Storm. During the ramp up and execution of Operation Enduring Freedom, she served two years in the Naval Personnel Mobilization Team. She then served as Officer in Charge of the Wil-

mington based Inshore Boat Unit (IBU), a unit used primarily to protect the waterborne supply lines of foreign ports during war. Notably, she served one year in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during Operation Iraqi



On board the deck of the U.S.S. North Carolina, Navy Chief Warrant Officer Shelly Thompson salutes a superior officer before ending her 26-year career with the United States Navy. (Heusinkveld Photos)

Freedom (OIF) conducting harbor defense operations. Additionally, she has served under Naval Coastal Warfare Units as well as the Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit (MIUWU) 212 based in Gulfport, Miss.

Chief, thank you for your service and duty to country, and many of us realize the sacrifices you have made with your family to carry out our missions. Freedom isn’t free. It is an honor and privilege to continue to serve with you on our Wilmington District Operations Team! ■

V/R,
Roger Bullock
SAW Chief of Navigation
(LCDR, USCG, Ret.)



CWO Thompson presents a flag to her daughter, Megan. Thompson was deployed roughly three years altogether away from Megan and her sister.

WILMINGTON DISTRICT WELCOMES NEWEST GROUP OF EMPLOYEES

Shelly Thompson,

Operations Division, Plant Section, returns to the Wilmington District from her previous job as Shelter Director at The Salvation Army. She has a Masters Degree in Urban Education: Guidance and Counseling and retired as a Chief Warrant Officer on 2 December 07 with 26 years of service in the U.S. Navy Reserve. She's married to Ivan Thompson from London, England, and she has two daughters, 18 year old Heather and Megan, 12. Her hobbies are watching movies, reading, and traveling.



Jimmy Price,

SAW's new Fleet Manager, comes to the District after working for the Triangle Transit Authority. Price is a retired U.S. Army veteran who served with the 3rd Infantry Division in Iraq, and who served with the 3rd U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard) at Fort Myer, Virginia. Price is currently pursuing a business degree at UNCW. The Charlotte, NC native's wife is Donna and he has three children, Derick, Jerica and Nicole.



Christopher Gra-

ham is an economist in the Technical Services Division, Planning & Environmental Branch. He came to SAW after 4.5 years with the Jacksonville District where he worked on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program. He has a BA in Economics from the University of Mississippi, and did his post graduate studies with Dalhousie University and the University of Tennessee. His wife of three months is Meredith, and he's an avid swimmer and novice triathlete.



Spencer Roylance

is a geographer in the Technical Services Division, Engineering Branch, General Engineering Section. Previously he spent 10.5 years with Booz Allen Hamilton consulting firm in Northern Virginia providing remote sensing support to the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA). Prior to working for Booz Allen, Spencer was a cartographer for the Defense Mapping Agency. He has a BS in Geography from James Madison University and a Master of Science degree in Geographic and Cartographic Sciences from George Mason University. He lives at



Wrightsville Beach with his wife and daughter and enjoys surfing, volleyball and biking.

Angela Righter,

CPAC, is currently attending UNCW majoring in Psychology and minoring in Science, the Humanities, and Society. She served her country in the U.S. Marine Corps for five years as a Signals Intelligence Collection Operator/Analyst. She absolutely adores her two nieces, Ava and Tess!



Candy Sriben,

Contracting, came to Wilmington as a Contract Administrator for Defense Contract Management Agency in Phoenix, Arizona. Candy has a B.S. in Finance from Arizona State University and is Level I certified in contracting. She moved to the area three months ago with her boyfriend and 21 month old daughter.



Jennifer Haggett,

CPAC, is a student office aid. She's currently attending UNCW pursuing a degree in Elementary Education with a



Con't on page 9

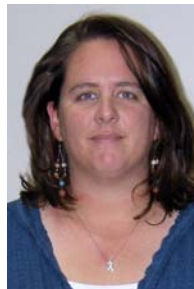
WATER SAFETY CON'T

minor in psychology. She is the daughter of Sharon Haggett of Project Management and she likes to run in her off time.

Christy Wicker works in CPAC as a student office aid. She's attending Cape Fear Community College for her pre-associates degree in science, and wants to transfer to UNCW for the environmental studies program. The daughter of Regulatory's Henry Wicker she enjoys kayaking and "anything outdoors."



Charlenne Figgins, a contract specialist with the Savannah Regional Contracting Center, Wilmington Office, previously worked in the Alumni Relations Office at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. She has a bachelors degree in Business Management from UNCW. Her main hobby is tennis where she travels to tournaments in North and South Carolina and also plays on several local league teams. Her mother is Sheila Figgins of the Construction Branch.

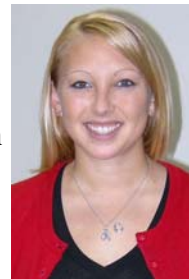


Brian Bentley is a Network Support Technician contractor in the Information Management Office. He is a veteran of the U.S.

Army where he served five years as a Military Intelligence Systems Maintainer/Integrator at Fort Bragg and where he earned his jump wings (Airborne). He deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq during his time in uniform.



Elana Sattin is an Engineering Intern with the Engineering Branch in the Design Section. She earned a BS in Civil Engineering from NC State. Born and raised in Wilmington she is the daughter of Bob Sattin, Chief of Operations. Elana has a second job tutoring high school math weekday afternoons. She plays tennis, likes to travel, and is studying to get her PE.



R. Todd Rehanek is an Information Technology Specialist who comes to the Wilmington District from the Buffalo District. Currently he works on the helpdesk as he gets ready to transition to the new ACE-IT team in



February. Todd is a Desert Storm veteran and is retired from the Air Force Reserves with 25 years total military service which began with four years in the Navy.

James Deeney is stationed aboard the Dredge FRY as Mate. He currently holds a 1600- ton Master, and 2nd Mate Unlimited tonnage license. He came to SAW from the Portland District, Dredge ESSAYONS as 2nd Mate. He retired from the USCG, and served in the US Air Force for four years. He has an Associated Degree from the University of Phoenix in Computer Science. He and his wife, Carri, enjoy horseback riding, and own two quarter horses. Carri is a Registered Nurse, and works at the trauma unit at Duke Hospital, in Durham. Son Chase attends Alamance Community College with intentions to later transfer to NC State for an education in engineering. Daughter Beth lives in Bend, OR with her husband.



John Mayo is a Contracting Specialist in the Wilmington Contracting office as part of the Savannah District. Before coming to Wilmington he worked in contracting



Con't on page 10

EMPLOYEES CON'T

for the Air Force in Wyoming. He has a BS from Regis University and a masters degree from American University. A U.S. Air Force veteran, he was missile maintenance technician for 11 years. He is married with a two-year-old daughter.

Ernest Carr is a Workforce Management Support Specialist in CPAC. He retired from the U.S. Army in 2005, after more than 20 years of service as a Combat Engineer/Human Resources Specialist. His military career culminated as the Senior Human Resources Specialist for the U.S. Army, 22d Chemical Battalion/U.S. Army Soldier Biological Chemical Command at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland. Upon retirement he continued to serve his country as an Administrative Officer/Human Resources Specialist for the U.S. Army at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland. Ernest and his wife, Carolyn, are natives of Pender County and currently reside in Burgaw, NC. They have two adult children, Tamiris and DeVonte.



Carol Abercrombie is a Civil Engineer, Technical Services Division, Engineering Branch, Geotechnical and Environmental Remediation Branch with duty at the Savannah District. She returned to Civil Works after working for the past three years in military master planning in the Savannah District. She previously worked as a Civil Engineer in the Coastal and Waterways Engineering Section in the Hydrology and Hydraulics Branch for 20 years. She has BS from the University of South Carolina, Marine Science, and an MS in Environmental Engineering from Clemson. She's married with three children- two sons (18 and 23) and one 13-year-old daughter.



earned an Associate's Degree in Science and an Associate's Degree in General Studies from Patrick Henry Community College. Prior to working with the Corps, Jessica worked for a family construction company in Collinsville, VA, where she is originally from. Jessica is engaged to marry Thomas Gillispie in 2008.

Emily Jernigan is originally from Kill Devil Hills on the Outer Banks NC. She recently graduated from the University of NC at Wilmington with a Degree in Environmental Studies. She works in the Regulatory Department in the Washington, North Carolina Field Office.



Jessica Craven, Ranger co-op, Philpott Lake. Jessica is working towards a Bachelor's Degree in Business with a Minor in Biology at Averett University. She has already



WELCOME TO OUR NEW EMPLOYEES!

*Have a wonderful, safe,
and happy holiday!*



DISTRICT MEMBERS RECOGNIZED FOR OUTSTANDING ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Jeff Richter, left, was recognized for assuming a Vicksburg District-led mulch recycling program when he deployed to Hattiesburg, Mississippi for Hurricane Katrina Recovery.

Oweita Freeman, right, attended the National Women of Color Technol-



ogy All-Stars Award in Atlanta. This event, the 12th National Women of Color Technology Award Conference, honored women from the United States and internationally for their outstanding achievements in the technology field.



South Atlantic Division Commander Brigadier General Joe Schroedel awarded two Wilmington District members for outstanding service during a Town Hall Meeting. **Patty Hargrove**, left, was recognized for outstanding performance as the Project Manager for the 2007 USACE Commanders Course conducted in Vicksburg, MS during the period 15-19 October 2007. Patty was responsible for the planning and execution of the course.

BG Schroedel also recognized **Hank Maser**, right, for distinguished service as the Acting Deputy District Engineers for Program and Project Management, Jacksonville District from 9 April to 24 August 2007. Congratulations to all for dedicated work and exceptional performance.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LOSE YOURSELF IN STAINED GLASS

Emergency Management's Diane Lastinger and Project Management's Glenn McIntosh have something in common. They both enjoy a hobby where they lose themselves in their prospective work areas at their homes by creating beautiful pieces of stained glass. It's a hobby they've both excelled at and something that they enjoy doing, especially after a stressful day at work.

Diane- "I've been cutting glass for about 15 years. I took a class with a friend at the community arts center to learn the basics, and was immediately hooked. It's great therapy...like creating your own jigsaw puzzle and you

get to cut the pieces to fit! It's a tremendous creative outlet...colors, shades, patterns; types of glass are all selected to give you just the look you want. Literally, just about any photograph or picture can be turned into stained glass art. The reasons why I do this are as varied as the types of glass...just let the light shine through a piece of bulls eye, or gluechip, or baroque, or iridized. Other than needing a ready supply

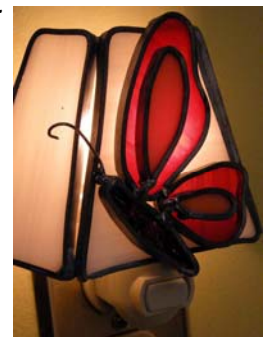
of band aids, it's pure satisfaction!

Glenn- "I took a class about 10 or so years ago that Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation offered. I



Lastinger concentrates on cutting pieces of glass just right for an exact fit. Her NCSU glass is a popular item that's attracted buyers.

made one small sun catcher after that and did not do anything else until May of 2006 when I made an ECU Pirates flat panel for a graduation present. I have always been fascinated by stained glass, primarily



Lastinger's nightlight casts a warm glow.



In the privacy of his backyard work shed, Glenn McIntosh puts his creativity into high gear with a Santa design. Inset; the finished product.

Con't on page 13

STAINED GLASS CON'T

those in church windows. However, as retirement time approaches, I wanted something to do as a hobby or perhaps a source of income once I do retire. I have always thought that I would do something with woodworking and still may, but I think that I will eventually get totally hooked on stained glass once I get a larger shop. To do it is a work of love. It's not something that you can do and not really be into it." ■

Right- Lastinger uses natural light to bring out the colors of various glass.

Bottom left- Tracing a design.

Center- A finished stained glass window in her home.

Bottom right- What was once a painting is now glass.



Left- McIntosh lays out one of several sections of his Santa design.

Below- This special glass cutter sprays water for an even and smooth cut.

Right- An engineering feat. This 12-point star is a good example of the technical aspect of McIntosh's hobby.



WEBSITE HIGHLIGHTS

WITH BARBARA EKLAND

In the Christmas Spirit, here are a number of gifting ideas...the gifts that keep giving.

Oxfam America works in 26 countries around the world. This catalog (www.oxfamamericaunwrapped.com) contains gift items that symbolically represent our work. The items selected represent project goals from grants disbursed by our seven offices around the world. The purchase of each gift item is a contribution toward Oxfam America's many programs, not a donation to a specific project or goal. Your donation will be used where it is needed the most--to help people living in poverty throughout the world. For example, if you donate a sheep, the dollar amount of your donation goes to Oxfam America to be used as best needed and

where it is most needed, while a gift card is sent in your name to the "gift" recipient.

Similarly, Heifer Project International (www.heifer.org) also offers unique gift ideas. When you make a donation, you are given the opportunity to designate gifts to specific country programs or for specific animals. Every gift to Heifer represents a gift to their total mission of purchasing and transporting food and income-producing animals, as well as providing intensive training in animal husbandry; environmentally sound, sustainable farming; community development and global education.

Andi Grant, a friend of mine, and I were coworkers at a firm in Connecticut and she introduced me to her "pet" project now called www.Give2theTroops.com. Her husband was a marine reservist and was sent to Iraq in

2002. She learned of this need for care packages for deployed troops from her husband and hasn't stopped since. This grassroots project has blossomed into an awe-inspiring organization with offices/branches in 8 states. Please consider supporting this group of volunteers that give 110% for our troops.

Just for Fun

Also known as the Urban Legends Reference Pages, www.Snopes.com is a website created and maintained by Barbara and David P. Mikkelsen to de-bunk urban legends and rumors. Today, most of the material is circulating the internet email universe. The site hopes to enlighten the public about on the folklore, gossip, misinformation and suspicious weird "news" out there. Great for a good laugh at how gullible we all can be. ■

CORPS FAMILY NEWS

USA Swimming, the official governing body of the sport of competitive swimming in the United States, selected Nathan Porter, son of **Elizabeth Porter** from the Regulatory Division, for the 2007 Men's Scholastic All-American Team. Porter qualified for the distinction by earning enough points through USA Swimming's scoring system based on his grade point av-

erage and his placements in two individual events in the 2007 Speedo Sectional Championships in Atlanta, Georgia.

In this competition, Porter competed in the 200-yard Backstroke and 100-



yard butterfly. He has a 4.0 GPA from Hoggard High School.

Regulatory Co-op student **Jessica Hooten** graduated from UNCW December 15th with a BA in Environmental Studies. She plans to continue her education at UNCW with a certificate in Environmental Studies.



COLELLA, HALL FIRST CERTIFIED PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS

The Project Manager and Program Manager Career Development Program (PPM-CDP) provides a framework for the training, education, and experience necessary to ensure the systematic and consistent development of Project Management and Program Management career civilians within USACE.

The overall goal of the PPM-CDP is to attract, develop, and sustain outstanding Project and Program Managers capable of leading projects and programs to total success, meeting or exceeding customer expectations, as well as to enhance employee opportunities for career development. The program seeks to develop and enhance project management skills through a combination of education, experience, and on-the-job and formal classroom training in project management, general management, leadership and organizational culture including Army values. One key requirement of Level II and Level III certification is passing the Project Management Institute's exam to be a certified Project Management Professional. **Sam Colella and Mitch Hall** were the first employees in Wilmington District to pass the exam and are an example to us all. Mitch was already a certified Professional Geologist, so Wilmington District is doubly proud to call him our own! And to the rest of the Program and Project Managers - keep studying hard!



Sam Colella

Mitch Hall

PASTOR BILL

COME THE DROUGHTS OF LIFE

On a recent walk I came upon a pond that had totally dried up. There was not a drop of water to be seen, even in what would have been its deepest spot. I sat on its edge and stared into it. Grass

grew over its bottom and the pond cypress trees ringed its shore. I had sampled this pond after heavy rains some years ago and found its waters to be alive with many creatures. But I've also seen it dry many times before. It is a beautiful example of a fascinating type of ecosystem – temporary (or ephemeral) ponds.

Because of this year's drought, our rivers and lakes are at record lows and it is a time of stress for man and many other creatures. So many lives revolve around the presence or absence of water but we, with our modern distribution systems, don't often think about our supply of water until a time when it becomes scarce.

Droughts have always been, and always will be, but when they will come and how long they will last will likely remain a mystery. Our weather records just do not go far enough back in time for us to be able to tell what we can really expect in the future. But tree rings can help us reach back further in time. Modern tree ring analysis shows that there have been some dry spells lasting many years. One recent tree ring analysis disclosed a 7-year long drought in the late



Bill Adams

16th century and speculated that the Lost Colony on Roanoke Island was destined to fail because of it.

Strange as it may seem, there are aquatic creatures that need their habitat to dry up in order for the species to continue to live there. If these ponds were to hold water continuously, predatory animals like fishes would eventually become permanent residents. The residents of temporary ponds are defenseless and cannot stand heavy predation; therefore temporary ponds must dry out occasionally to keep predators out. These ponds typically hold water for several weeks or months during wet periods and then dry out until the rains come again.

In my experience, each temporary pond seems to have a different animal community. They are populated by animals that have migrated overland, like frogs and toads; by those that have flown in, like insects; and by chance introductions from birds, either as adhesive eggs attached their feet or by passing unscathed through their gut. With this variety of possible introduction sources, the make-up of these communities can be surprisingly diverse.

Such temporary ponds truly are amazing places and it is only after the rains that their true nature is revealed. They become places of living waters, springing to life. Tadpoles, copepods, fairy shrimps, clam shrimps, and insect larvae can appear in incredible numbers. After the passage of Hurricane Fran some years ago, I sampled many ponds and found each to hold a dif-

ferent group of animals. In a temporary pond next to the parking lot at the Municipal golf course, I found a clam shrimp that had never been seen south of Massachusetts. In another, I found small aquatic snails that had sealed up their openings and had just been waiting for the water to return. And that is key - whether as eggs or adults, all creatures using temporary ponds must be able to wait for water. It may be months or years but they must be able to wait.

As I sat looking at this grassy, cypress-ringed depression, it occurred to me how like these temporary ponds we humans are. Each of us is unique. Each of us experiences times of drought in our souls and find ourselves in need of living water to nourish us. We experience what St John of the Cross called, "a dark night of the soul." These spiritual dry spells can last days, weeks, or years. Nothing seems right. God is silent. We thirst, we want, but we must wait. How long will our drought last? For each of us it is different. For many people droughts come many times.

I believe our droughts are necessary for they force us to focus on what is essential. Without the times of drought, we would never appreciate or grow into the fullness of life. Without times of drought, we would soon grow undisciplined. We do not know what causes the droughts in nature or those in our souls. Nor do we have a remedy for them. But we know they will come and that they are necessary. We just have to persevere until the waters bring life again. ■